

Andrew Jackson to George Washington Campbell, October 15, 1812, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO GEORGE W. CAMPBELL.1

1 Copy. This letter is given in Parton's *Jackson*, I. 356, with date as "Sept., 1812". It exists in Jackson's hand in a clear and legible copy, evidently not a draft. In composition and manner it is unrestrained and rambling, that is, in Jackson's worst style. The original is in the War Dept. files. It was published by his enemies in the campaign of 1828. See the *National Journal* (tri-weekly), Apr. 3, 1828, and Dec. 15, 1829.

Hermitage, October 15, 1812.

sir , You will receive herewith inclosed, the certificate of John Gordon and Major Thomas G Bradford editor of the Clarion on the subject of the card bearing date Sept. 11th 1812 published in the Clarion on the 26th of Sept. 1812 from Silas Dinsmore united States agent to the Choctaw nation being in the proper hand writing of the said Silas Dinsmore. you will also receive enclosed, the paper of the 26th. Sept. containing the Card of Mr. Dinsmore, which I beg you to lay before the secratary of war, as soon as the[y] reach you, and I beg of you to communicate to me without delay his determination as it respect the removal of Mr. Dinsmore. When I recd your letter of the 10th. of April last inclosing me an extract of the secratary of wars letter to Silas Dinsmore agent to the Choctaw Nation, I, nor the citizens of West Tennessee, hesitated not, to believe that Silas Dinsmore would cease to exercise over our citizens Such lawless tyranny as he had been in the habit of, and that our peacefull and honest citizens would be left to enjoy the free and unmolested use of that road as secured to them by treaty. you can easily Judge and so can the Secretary of War, our surprise and indignation, at the wanton insult offerred to the whole citizens of

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west Tennessee by the publication of his card in the Clarion, in which he boasts, that he has set at defiance the Solem treaty that Secures to our citizens and those of the united States the free and unmolested use of that road as well as the express instructions of the Secratary of War of the 23rd. of march last,² and boast his

² These instructions were as follows: “ *Sir*, The laws regulating trade and intercourse with the Indians provide against all trespasses, and encroachments on the Indian Territory, but are not construed to authorise the stopping of any person travelling through the country in a peacable manner on the public road or highway; you will therefore refrain from the exercise of any such authority hereafter.” They accompany this present letter, in the War Dept. files.

detention of a defenceless woman and her property, *and for what!* the want of a pass port? and *my god*; is it come to this, are we *free men or are we slaves is this real or is it a dream*—for what are we involved in a War with great Britain is it not for the support of our rights as an independant people and a nation, secured to us by nature and by natures god as well as Solem treaties and the law of nations, and can the Secratary of war for one moment retain the idea, that we will permit this petty Tyrant to sport with our rights secured to us by treaty and which by the law of nature we do possess, and sport with our feelings by publishing his *lawless tyranny excercised over a helpless and unprotected female*—if he does he thinks too meanly of our Patriotism and galantry—were we base enough to surrender our independant rights secured to us by the bravery and blood of our fore fathers, we are unworthy the name of *freemen* , and we view all rights secured to us by Solem treaty, under the constituted authority, *rights* secured to us by the blood of our fathers and which we will never yield but with our lives. The indignation of our citizens are only restrained by assurances that goverment so soon as they are notified of this unwarrantable insult, added to the many injuries that Silas Dinsmore has heaped upon our honest and unofending citizens, that he will be removed. Should we be deceived in this, be *frank* with the Secratary of war, that we are free men, and that we will suport the sup[r]emacy of the laws, and that the wrath and indignation of our Citizens will sweepe

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from the earth the invader of their legal rights and involve Silas Dinsmore in the flames of his agency house—we love order, and nothing but a suport of our legal and inalienable rights, would or could prompt us to do an act, that could be construed as wearing the appearance of rashness—but should not the source of the evil be removed, our rights secured by treaty restored to our citizens, the agent, and his houses will be demolished, and when government is applied to, and so often notified of the injuries heaped upon our citizens and they will adhere to the agent who delights in treading under foot the rights of the citizens, and exults in their distresses, the evil be upon the goverment not upon the people who have so often complained without redress. we really hope that the evil will be cut off by the root, by a removal of the agent. Should this not be done we will have a right fairly to conclude that the administration winks at the agents conduct under the rose, notwithstanding the instructions of the Secratary in his letter to Mr Dinsmore of the 23rd. of march. the right of nature occurs, and if redress is not afforded, I would despise the wretch that would slumber in qu[i]et one night before he cutt up by the roots the invader of his Solem rights, regardless of consequences, let not the Secratary of war believe that we want more than Justice, but both from indians and indian agents, we will enjoy the rights secured to us by Solem treaty or we will die nobly in their support. we want but a bare fulfilment of the treaty. we neither under stand the Tyranny of the agent in open violation of our rights secured to us by treaty, or the Creek law, that takes from the United States the right guranteed by treaty. that the indians who commit murders on our citizens, shall be delivered up when demanded, to be tried by the laws of the united States and punished, — *the Creek law says the Creeks will punish them, themselves* . These innovation[s] without the consent of the constituted power of the goverment being first had our citizens do not understand, the information of Colo Hawkins U. S. agent for the Creeks and the information of Genl James Robertson agent of the Chickasaw Nation, to the contrary notwithstanding neither can we the citizens of Tennessee believe without better proof that the hair of the head of one of the murderers of Manleys family and Crawleys at the mouth of Duck river are disturbed by the Creeks, when we have proof that they have lately passed near to Caskaskia fifteen in number to Join the Prophet. In this particular we want

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and do expect the murderers delivered up agreeable to treaty—this is only *Justice* this we ask of Government—this we are entitled to, and this we must (sooner or later) and will have. This may be thought strong language, but it is the language that freemen when the[y] are only claiming a fulfilment of their rights ought to use. it is a language that the[y] ought to be taught to lisp from their cradles, and never when they are claiming rights from any nation ever to abandon.

Pardon the trouble I have given you in this long letter, it relates to the two subjects that has for sometime irritated the publick mind, and is now ready to burst forth in vengeance. I am
Dr sir with due reguard